


2-1992

Yale Political Monthly 1992 February

The Politic, Inc.

Follow this and additional works at: <http://elischolar.library.yale.edu/politic>

 Part of the [American Politics Commons](#), [International Relations Commons](#), [Policy Design, Analysis, and Evaluation Commons](#), [Policy History, Theory, and Methods Commons](#), [Political Theory Commons](#), [Public Affairs Commons](#), and the [Public Policy Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

The Politic, Inc., "Yale Political Monthly 1992 February" (1992). *The Politic*. 26.
<http://elischolar.library.yale.edu/politic/26>

This Yale Political Monthly is brought to you for free and open access by the Yale University Publications at EliScholar – A Digital Platform for Scholarly Publishing at Yale. It has been accepted for inclusion in The Politic by an authorized administrator of EliScholar – A Digital Platform for Scholarly Publishing at Yale. For more information, please contact elischolar@yale.edu.

The Yale Political Monthly

An Undergraduate Publication

Fighting the Imperial President

An Interview with Jim Wright

We Shall Not Be Moved

Anti-War Protests: Tolerance and Callousness

The Silent Minority

The Plight of Native Americans on the Anniversary of Wounded Knee

Love: An American Fairy-Tale

What Hollywood Gets Right and Wrong about Love, Sex, and Romance

Letter

Don't Get Islam Wrong

Observations

Why We Must Destroy Saddam

VOLUME 12, NUMBER 4 ♡ FEBRUARY 1991

Kimberly Kessler, Editor
Frederick Kagan, Executive Editor
Gautam Dutta, Managing Editor
Carlos Viana, Senior Editor

Assistant Editors
Andrew Sullivan
Hugh Galford
Jeff Campione
Kevin Delaney

Contributors
William Rhee
Mark Barnett
Neil Brenner
Scott Savitz

Vaughan Turekian, Publisher
Chris Calamari, Business Manager
L. Jon Wertheim, Assistant Publisher
Oren Levy, General Manager
Andrew Sullivan, Associate Publisher
Vasily Rudich, Faculty Advisor
The Dread Pirate Roberts

PAST EDITORS OF THE YPM

Robert Kagan (1979-1980)
Joseph Rose (1980-1981)
Michael Froomkin (1981-1982)
Diana West (1982-1983)
Gideon Rose (1983-1985)
Fareed Zakaria (1985-1986)
Adam Freedman (1986-1987)
Bart Aronson (1987-1988)
Frederick Kagan (1988-1989)
John Kuszewski (1989-1990)

We are the Yale Political Monthly. We were founded in 1979 by Robert Kagan and Joseph Rose for the purpose of promoting informed debate and reasoned discussion. We espouse no one set of beliefs, but rather print articles which represent a wide range of political opinion. The views expressed in the YPM are those of the contributors and do not necessarily reflect those of the staff of the magazine or of Yale University.

We encourage responses and will print all thoughtful and well-written letters with appropriate authorial response in the hope of stimulating continued dialogue on campus. All written material should be submitted to the Editor or mailed to the YPM. Students wishing to join the staff of the YPM should contact the Editor at 436-1000.

The Staff of the YPM wishes to extend its thanks to Gideon Rose, Adam Freedman, Robert Kagan, Fareed Zakaria, and John Kuszewski for their invaluable advice and assistance.

The Yale Political Monthly is a non-profit undergraduate organization. For subscription information, contact the Editor or the Publisher.

Copyright 1991 by the Yale Political Monthly.

The Yale Political Monthly
7242 Yale Station
New Haven, Conn. 06520

The Yale Political Monthly

An Undergraduate Publication

VOLUME 12, NUMBER 4
FEBRUARY, 1991

4 Letter

Reacting to "Israel Has the Right to Defend Itself"

5 Observations

Fighting the Imperial President
6 *An Interview with Jim Wright*

*The former Speaker of the House of Representatives
gives a dissenting view of the Reagan years.*

We Shall Not Be Moved
11 *Andrew Sullivan*

*With the advent of the Gulf Crisis the anti-war
protest movement has been revived. But is anyone
really paying attention to the issues?*

The Silent Minority
15 *Scott Savitz*

*Minority-conscious as American society has become,
we have still not adequately faced our history of
oppression of Native Americans.*

Love: An American Fairy-Tale
18 *Gautam Dutta*

*Pretty Woman, Bull Durham, The Accidental Tourist,
and The Princess Bride: sex, love, and romance in
American popular culture.*

MADAM—When I read Mr. Barnett's article, "Israel Has the Right to Defend Itself" (November 1990), I found myself agreeing with his conclusions, but shocked and appalled by his assumption that Islam is anti-semitic.

This assumption is incorrect. Mr. Barnett quotes Albert Memmi, who says: "It is not Zionism that has caused anti-semitism, but the other way around." According to Mr. Barnett, Mr. Memmi is an authority on this topic because he is "a Tunisian-born writer and a political theorist." It is important to remember, however, that Mr. Memmi is only one man who is expressing his personal opinion. Even though Mr. Memmi's opinion is educated and thus may be of more value than that of other people, his opinion cannot compete with the Koran, the very Bible of the Islamic religion, which states that Jews, Christians, and Muslims alike are peoples of the Book who will receive their reward on Judgement Day. Albert Memmi is correct that individual Muslims, like any other people, can be anti-semitic. Islam as a whole, however, is not anti-Jewish.

During the Middle Ages, Jews received better treatment in the Islamic world than in non-Muslim Europe, rising to become the right hand men of sultans. While medieval Europeans massacred entire communities and subjected their Jewish countrymen to pogroms, the Jews of the Islamic world were respected citizens.

I feel that it is necessary to point out this error in Mr. Barnett's essay because the idea that Islam as a whole is anti-Jewish is dangerous, capable of leading those who are misinformed to become anti-Islamic. This type of anti-Islamic Zionism was advanced by the late Rabbi Meir Kahane, a man who wanted to

expel all Arabs from Israel, a man who advocated violence. As human beings, we should not wave the bloody shirt of past oppression to justify abuses of human rights in return. This means that Jews should respect those who are not Jews who live in Israel. We should remember the iniquities of the past especially so as not to commit the same crimes a second time.

I agree that Israel has the right to defend itself and to hold the West Bank, but Israel is no more entitled to descend into the depths of hatred than any other nation. The Arab-Israeli conflict must be seen as one of two clans who want the same strip of land. Both have a rich history that reaches back thousands of years, entitling both to the region. We must hope and pray that the two nations will find a way to share the land. Rather than naively wish for peace, we must work for peace, and one of the first steps towards this goal is understanding the other side. This is impossible, however, when you begin by wrongly assuming that the religion of your neighbors expresses hatred towards you.

—Matt Eisenfeld, '93

Mr. Barnett did not choose to respond to this letter. —Ed.

Observations

Although Americans have, at least until now, closed ranks behind our servicemen in the Persian Gulf region, the cause for which those people are fighting has escaped almost everyone. The issue is not oil. The issue is not Kuwait. The issue is not American imperial designs on the Middle East. The issue is freedom and survival. About five months ago Saddam Hussein, dictator of Iraq, invaded Kuwait and began massing forces on the Saudi Arabian border. At that time there did not appear to be any limits to his appetites, and no such limits have since turned up.

Hussein's desire for leadership in the Arab world is not unique to him - Egypt's Mubarak and Syria's Assad have long vied for that role. What makes Iraq unique is that neither Syria nor Egypt has launched a war of subjugation against another Arab state. For those who do not understand the difference between the desire to do something and the act of doing it, it may seem that we are splitting hairs. The difference, however, is important.

By violating a clear rule of conduct in the Arab world, Saddam Hussein has indicated that he does not consider himself to be bound by any rules. Nor is this the first rule he has broken. He has not scrupled to kill his own civilian population *en masse* by subjecting them to chemical attack, nor has he scrupled to launch missiles into the population centers of a non-combatant nation.

Ordinarily, although the average decent person would be disgusted and offended by such behavior, one would not call for the introduction of a massive military force and the initiation of a war to destroy him. What makes Operation Desert Storm imperative is that Saddam Hussein is working as rapidly as he can to obtain and deploy nuclear weapons. He has shown that he abides by no law, no norm of international conduct, and recognizes no restrictions but those imposed by his ego. We cannot expect that he will begin to recognize laws and morals once he has at his fingertips the most powerful destructive force man has ever envisioned. We must assume that, once pos-

sessed of nuclear weapons, he will proceed, by threat of their use, to blackmail all of the countries within range of his warheads to submit to his designs. His threats, in fact, need not be limited by the range of his missiles, for nuclear bombs can be used in "terrorist" attacks as well as strategic strikes. Saddam Hussein would then be able to attempt to hold the world up for ransom, and there is little reason to doubt that over time he would try.

And every time he tried the world would have but two choices: surrender or nuke him. The possible responses are limited to these because, unlike the Soviet Union, China, Great Britain, France, and the United States, and the odd collection of other countries who have come or are coming to possess nuclear capabilities, Saddam will not be deterred from using them. He has shown repeatedly that he cares nothing for casualties inflicted upon his own population as long as he himself is not killed and his cause not lost. He has shown that his opponents must always prove to him that they are willing to attack him or defend themselves, for he never assumes such willingness on their parts. If we threatened to nuke him, he would not believe us. Yet when he threatens to nuke us we must believe him. We could expect to impose fearful losses on his civilian population in a conventional attack but we could neither be sure of killing him nor be certain of destroying his nuclear capacity. Without that certainty he would proceed, and the rest of the world would be faced with terrible options.

Nuclear weapons in Saddam's hands would make him a potent threat to the security of every people and every country on earth and could be removed only at the price of grievous losses both to Iraq and to the country or countries which undertook to remove it. Talk about oil, talk about militarism, talk about how democratic or un-democratic Kuwait might be is simply talk which misses the point. The point is: are we willing to pay the price for security now, as a hedge against inflation? For the minute Saddam Hussein develops a nuclear capability, peace will, indeed, become priceless.

- Frederick Kagan, '91

The opinions expressed in this article are the author's and do not necessarily reflect those of the YPM or of Yale University.

Fighting the Imperial President

An Interview with Jim Wright

In a past interview you said your motivation for joining public life was to contribute to the peace of the world. Why do you think today's generation of politicians join politics? Is such idealism still present?

Surely there must be idealism among many of those who enter public life. It doesn't provide the kind of livelihood that in and of itself would be attractive to a capable, intelligent person. There has to be an allure beyond that of material enrichment. Nobody, of course, can characterize the motive on the part of a whole generation of Americans. They vary; they differ. Each is an individual. To attribute motives to other people is to play God, anyway, isn't it? I may disagree with someone's method or with someone's policy or with someone's opinion, but I shouldn't challenge that individual's motive unless I have some reason beyond my disagreement to challenge it.

So you're just basing it on what they do?

I think you have to assume sincerity on the part of your political opponents if you expect them to assume your own sincerity. I've found that in life you're better off beginning with an assumption of others' sincerity and purity of purpose, and when you proceed from that beginning, it is likely they are inclined to recognize that you are a person of decent intentions yourself.

Today it's perceived that there's a lack of political courage among many politicians with one

This interview was conducted by Gautam Dutta on 5 January 1991. It will be continued next issue.

basic issue: taxes. Can one survive politically today without resorting to some sort of expediency? Today one route to political success seems to be: get a fast commercial out and don't really irritate or anger the people, and this means don't raise taxes. Is there any way out of this?

Of course there is. During this busy decade of the 1980s in which the federal government simply relinquished its responsibilities, local governments have had to raise taxes repeatedly. I do not believe there is a city in America that has not been confronted with the necessity to raise taxes. This has come about because the federal government has abdicated its responsibility to the cities and local units of government and because it has placed upon them additional responsibilities to perform jobs that the federal government previously was doing. Those local officials have faced up to the simple necessity of raising taxes. They've done it repeatedly. They've been re-elected. They seem to have demonstrated more courage collectively than members of Congress have done. I'm not sure it was altogether a lack of courage, however, on the part of members of Congress. I think it was intimidation by the popularity of Ronald Reagan. Ronald Reagan thumped the podium and powerfully declaimed that he was going to balance the budget by 1983. Of course we know the result. He unbalanced the budget far more severely than all of his other predecessors combined. Thirty-nine presidential administrations from George Washington through Jimmy Carter accumulated and amassed a national debt of slightly under one trillion dollars, and in ten years of Ronald Reagan it tripled. It is more than three trillion dollars today. So he was history's all-time

The federal government has abdicated its responsibility to the cities and local units of government

champion of budget unbalancing. Yet his rhetoric continued to declaim his purpose of balancing the budget, and he pointed the finger of scorn repeatedly at Congress and his democratic opponents, branding them "big spenders." This notwithstanding the fact that annually Ronald Reagan's budgets, his requests for spending, totalled more than Congress authorized [by figures] in the trillions; year after year that was the case. The difference, of course, was that he was spending it on military matters and the Congress was being forced to reduce the amounts it was investing in such vital things for the United States as education, public health, housing, transportation, environmental quality, the courts, and all those other things that make up the framework of civilian government.

Due to what you called the "federal abdication of responsibility" on the state and local level, a lot of states felt the pinch and, for example, the governments of Massachusetts and Connecticut and others in Vermont all had to resign or were not re-elected. How would you interpret that vote on the people's part? What were they trying to say?

I think they were trying to say that they were disenchanted with the disproportionate imbalance that has crept into the federal taxing system. Because of Ronald Reagan and his success in unbalancing the fairness of the burden, it no longer is a progressive tax system in any realistic sense. In 1921 the top tax bracket was 73 percent and that top bracket applied only to those earning more than one million dollars. One million dollars at that time was something like fifty times as much as the average American family had. Today the top bracket is not nearly that high, it's something like 33, 36 percent rather than 73 percent, and it applies not to the top 2 percent, it applies to the top 40 percent. The top tax bracket applies to those making two to two and a half times what the average family makes. So you see, the burden has been placed on average income and middle income Americans. Now, this has been compounded by the reduction of income rates at the top tax brackets and exacerbated by the imposition of new taxes that are regressive in character: user fees, excise taxes, and the greater necessity on the part of cities and local governments to raise property taxes. All of those are regressive taxes and they fall most heavily on the middle- and in some cases on the

low-income people. So I think the American people are disgusted, disenchanted, and are unhappy in the extreme with what has happened to the fairness of the taxing system.

This has led to a lot of negative campaigning. The obvious problem with negative campaigning is that it does not cover the issues. Now, in one of your past interviews you suggested that free prime time spots be given for each candidate to outline the issues. My question is: how would you organize the specifics? The obvious problem is to whom would you give such free time, because then you'll have the Socialist and Libertarian candidates arguing for free time as well.

Let me simply try to conceptualize the general idea. I'm not going to quarrel about the details. I have no pride of authorship in any of the specifics. But I do believe we have to recognize that there are two or three fundamental ills that afflict the American political system today. One is the disproportionate amount of money that is required to wage a successful political campaign. In 1958 the average campaign for Congress was costing about one hundred thousand dollars. In 1988 the average campaign for Congress was costing about six hundred thousand dollars. Now, for a Senate seat I think the differential was equally as great, and you can't really make an average for the Senate seat because there's such great disparity in the size of states. Just assume that for the average House seat it costs now perhaps seven or eight times as much money to wage a successful campaign as it did in 1968. This tends to limit access to high public office only to either those who have a lot of money of their own through inheritance or otherwise, or to those who are willing wards of the wealthy and most willing to accept contributions from people who have money. I think that's very unhealthy in and of itself. The other thing I find to be so demeaning about the present political environment is what you mentioned, the prevalence of negative campaigning. I'm inclined to think that this has come about through the dominance of the media by TV, and the insistence of television network and local stations on selling the little, quick, slick sound bytes. This precludes any possibility of any serious discussion of the issues. It insults the intelligence of the American public on the presumption that they are not smart enough to be subjects to discussion. It really degrades the entire system. In the arena

Because of Ronald Reagan we no longer have a progressive tax system in any realistic sense

I think the American people are disgusted, disenchanted, unhappy in the extreme with what has happened to the fairness of the taxing system

8

where Lincoln and Douglas once debated issues, we now are reduced to a contest: sloganeering! Who can come up with the quickest and slickest slogan? Who can offend the eardrums with the most egregious insult against his opponent? The quickie commercial has lent itself to negative campaigning for the reason that you can make a charge against someone in a very short period of time. You can level an unwarranted allegation in a few seconds. It takes the victim of that allegation many minutes to disprove the negatives, to prove that he is not guilty, and that puts him on the defensive, him or her. I think it's a wretched degradation of what was supposed to have been a holy political system, a noble undertaking. How do we cure those things? Well, first I think we need to adopt a workable, enforceable limit on the amount that a person may spend in his campaign, or maybe [the amount that others may] spend on his behalf. The court has said you may not do this unless they are not subsidized.

Buckley v. Valeo?

That's right. *Buckley v. Valeo*. As you read the dicta of the jurists you discover that Congress almost was invited to impose a system of federal participation in the financing of elections. This way, it was held that Congress legally and constitutionally could place enforceable limits on the amounts that were expended. Let us just throw out an idea. As I say, I am not going to defend this against some similar idea, but for purposes of discussion let us say that we believe we ought to spend no more than five hundred thousand dollars for a seat in Congress. We could impose an arbitrary limit of five hundred thousand dollars on the amount that may be spent on seeking election to Congress. And we could provide, from a dollar check-off, a voluntary check-off, a fund which we can match, let us say half that amount, or up to half that amount, and then we could perform an additional service to broaden the base of political giving, making for more contributors at smaller individual amounts - thereby lessening any sense of obligation that a candidate might have to any one individual. We could do this by providing that the government would match up to two hundred and fifty thousand dollars worth of contributions, but only those of, let us say, one hundred dollars or less. We might say two hundred dollars or less. In other words, if

Each TV station ought to be obliged to provide free air time to candidates

you had twenty-five thousand [one] dollar contributors or two thousand, five hundred contributors, I suppose, at one hundred dollars apiece, or twelve hundred and fifty contributors at two hundred dollars apiece, that would qualify as two hundred and fifty thousand dollars that you had raised in those smaller denominations of gifts and would qualify you as a candidate for two hundred and fifty thousand dollars of matching funds. That ought to bring the business of seeking congressional office down to a level that people might afford. How, then, do you approach the other problem, and how do you make this suffice? I think you have to come to TV, which is by far the most costly form of political advertising. When I was a candidate for the first time seeking a congressional seat in 1954, I would buy thirty minutes of prime time on the principal station of the Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex and it cost me five hundred and sixty dollars - for thirty minutes, prime time. In 1980, that same station, for that same spot, a thirty-minute slot, would charge me eight thousand dollars and by 1986 they were demanding forty-five thousand dollars. What they were trying to do, of course, was price the thirty-minute time out of the market and to force you to buy their little quickie ads which so trivialize the business of campaigning. In fact, by 1986 I could no longer afford to buy the thirty-minute spot with which I would enter into some serious discussion with people and answer questions on TV. No longer could I do that, and no longer can any political candidate do that. What I'd do, therefore, if I were writing the perfect law, would be...I'd have each TV outlet as part of its responsibility to public service, which responsibility broadcasters assume when they get a license to use the public airways, be obligated to provide a nominee of a political party with as much as ten percent of the vote in the last general election with not less than an hour and a half, let us say ninety minutes, of TV time on prime time which that candidate might use in such divisions as he chose, from five minutes to thirty minutes. He might, for example, take three thirty-minute programs, or he might take one thirty-minute program and three twenty-minute programs or take one thirty-minute program and six ten-minute programs, or any way he wanted to divide it up - except for the damn little quickie meaningless or insulting commercials. He, the candidate, or she, the candidate, would have to appear as himself or herself, not packaging a



9

slick commercial program. If he or she wanted to say something of his or her opponent, he or she would have to say it in his or her own voice, looking straight into the eye of the camera, and then the other party would have time to come back and answer it on his or her time. I do not know any other way to cure the most flagrant ills. That does not cure everything that's wrong with the American political system, and I suppose we never will cure all the ills. I do think, nevertheless, that these particular forms would have a measurable benign effect.

Do you think TV ultimately serves the good of politics? It's obviously here to stay. There always are charges and counter-charges by politicians and journalists alike in which each tries to manipulate the other. It is now alleged there is a new generation of "airbrush" politicians who are solely out there for the camera. Do you perceive TV as ultimately serving a good purpose?

I think it could be made to serve a good purpose. Television, the instrument itself, is neither good or bad. It's amoral. The way in which it is used can be to the benefit or the detriment of the political system. In my opinion, it is now being used to the detriment of the political system. It is cultivating arts that do not have anything to do with governing a country. It is insulting the intelligence of the American public by presuming that the average adult citizen has no more attention span than twenty seconds. It's degrading the quality of

political debate and trivializing the issues of life and death with which the government of the US must deal. I think it has fallen to a low state. Following the means I have suggested, serious discussion, not necessarily in a confrontational mode, but in a conversational mode, between the candidate and his public, would restore the dignity and much of the meaning to the American political dialogue. Television is by far the best means of reaching people; whether we like it or not, it is the most effective means of communicating with numbers of people. In the early days of our republic, a Congressional district consisted of thirty thousand citizens. Today it's five hundred thousand or six hundred thousand people. In the early days citizens would turn out to hear political debates. Today they are sated by entertainment at home which makes it much more difficult to raise a crowd to go out and listen to a political candidate. So I think we must use television. We ought to devise means by which it serves, rather than debases, the American political society.

This last election there were propositions in Oklahoma and California, among other states, to limit terms of state senators or state legislators. Do you think that is undue or too precipitate a step as far as manifesting voter disgust?

I think it approaches a problem by trying to solve a non-problem. The problem is not how long a person may have served. The problem is seeing to it that the public has the

TV insults the intelligence of the American public by presuming that the average citizen has an attention span of twenty seconds

IO

To say "I am not going to vote for the party, I am going to vote for the man" is to betray an ignorance of the way things work

opportunity to voice its effective choice. It isn't evil *per se* to elect someone with experience, is it? I don't think so. I can't imagine a rule which would provide that if you had to have your appendix out or you needed a heart bypass and went to the hospital, you were arbitrarily denied the services of any physician that had performed more than six operations. That would be outrageous, wouldn't it? Wouldn't it be just as ridiculous to assume that the most important business of the nation, the biggest business on earth, would be conducted by people who have been there no more than six years, by six terms? Of course it is. Not only this, I think it flies in the face of the Founding Fathers whose purpose was to see that the public was given the right to choose whomever it wished. Now if you arbitrarily tell people they may not choose a Congressman who has served them well, you limit their choice. That in itself is a very undemocratic act. What you need to do then, is to make it more possible for a multitude of people to seek public office. You do not approach it by arbitrarily limiting the number of years or terms an individual may serve. You approach it by limiting the amount of money that is necessary to be spent [to have a successful campaign]. It now has reached a point where a seat in Congress is like a seat in the New York Stock Exchange; it goes to the highest bidder. And that's not what they meant; that's the evil, not the fact that someone has experience in Congress. I can't think of a business on earth that would succeed if its main qualification were lack of experience among the people hired to do this work.

What would you view as the role of politics in general? There's always this conflict, for you need to reconcile two things: national objectives and partisan politics. How should people vote when they are considering candidates, on a partisan scale or on an individual basis? Today the party machines don't really exist, except perhaps in big cities, but that's the extent of it.

If you arbitrarily tell people they may not choose a Congressman who has served them well, that is a very undemocratic act

I think there is a difference between the parties, and anyone who thinks there isn't just hasn't followed things very closely. Basically, the Republican party is the party of less government, the party of *laissez-faire*, the party of big business as opposed to little business. The Democratic Party is the party of the needy...the party of those who are disenfranchised and dispossessed, those who are still

trying to claw their way up the ladder of American success. The Democratic Party believes in spreading the better things of life on as broad a basis as possible. The Republican Party believes in the trickle-down philosophy, that if you can simply shower enough benefits on those who are on the top of the economic pyramid, some of that will trickle down and thereby benefit others. The Democrats believe in a percolate-up philosophy. We can encourage the spread of jobs and wages as broadly as possible. Those people will then have buying power, which will help business because it would be the oil that lubricates the machinery of prosperity and percolates up through the system. There are two radically different philosophies. Now, to suggest there is no difference between the parties is to be blind to the history of American political science. To suggest that you can gain good government by being oblivious to the parties is to suggest that there is no difference. To say "I am not going to vote for the party, I am going to vote for the man" is to betray an ignorance of the way things work. You may indeed vote for the man, but whether you like it or not you get the party. The party which controls Congress is the party whose members comprise the majority of the Congress. If you vote for the Democrats, you are voting in essence for the Democratic leadership; if you vote for a Republican, you are voting for a Republican leadership. And it is just about that simple. If you vote for a Republican Presidential nominee, generally, you are not voting for personality only, or even primarily. [If you consider] George Bush, who says he's for a "kinder, gentler America," you discover that you're voting for a man because he's a Republican, [a man] who doesn't believe in spending money for college tuition to help kids go to college, who doesn't believe in spending money for public schools. He'd rather spend money on private schools to help those who can afford it to go to private schools - that's Republicanism. And however you like the personality of the individual, you're getting the party. On the other hand, if you're voting for the Democrat, you're getting the Democratic philosophy. I think one just has to discover what one wants, and I do not believe that the political parties are irrelevant. They have a relevancy which has been fuzzed over by the temptation for political practitioners to be inoffensive which you mentioned earlier. If you're sufficiently inoffensive, you stand for nothing.

We Shall Not Be Moved

II

Andrew Sullivan

Shortly after the beginning of hostilities against Iraq on 16 January, a candlelight vigil began on Cross Campus to protest the US raids on Iraq. I first heard about this when a gentleman entered the Berkeley television room, where about forty of us were intently watching the coverage on Cable News Network, and announced that a vigil was beginning and those against the war should come outside, if only for five minutes. At the time, no one budged, but around midnight I did go outside briefly. This vigil was an informal speak-out, with about eighty people alternately expressing their outrage at the attack and planning various tactics to oppose the war. Some had built a wooden replica of the Yale World War I monument and draped it in a black veil.

This served as a podium on the following afternoon at the rally on Cross Campus which attracted about three hundred people. Leaders of the anti-war movement spoke, led chants and songs, provided materials to make signs, discussed plans for future protests, and before long opened the microphone so that people could speak their minds about the war. After about an hour, the protest moved *en masse* to the New Haven Courthouse, where it joined another protest organized by New Haven anti-war groups. At this rally, we were told about the blockade of the Federal Building that morning, where sixty-three had been arrested while three hundred others demonstrated their support; we received information about another, similar rally which would be held on Friday morning. That night, Iraq launched seven Scud missiles against Israel and one

against Saudi Arabia, widening a war which until then had been limited to US and allied air assaults and Iraqi counter-fire.

The second rally at the Federal Building at its height only attracted about eighty people, thirty-one of whom were arrested. The blockade was completely peaceful, since people entering the building on business were diverted to another door and police cooperated with the demonstrators, at one point advising those who had already been arrested that they would need money for bail the second time. As the demonstrators chanted and sang, the police led or carried those who were blocking the door to a waiting van without violence on the part of either side. At the same time, a few counter-demonstrators across the street voiced their disdain. One made his way into the crowd and during a period of "speaking out" loudly announced his support for the war and then shoved his way out as he was shouted down; I was told that he did this so violently that he was arrested for assault. A single gentleman across the street stood silently with an American flag and watched.

On Friday afternoon I attended about two hours of the Teach-In sponsored by the Yale Committee for Peace in the Persian Gulf. As promised, the part I attended was reasonably non-partisan, with professors and students stating views ranging from support of to ardent opposition to the war before a packed Battell Chapel. In addition to lengthy question-and-answer sessions, I heard the opening statements of five professors.

Professors David Montgomery and Sara Suleri forcefully stated their opposition to the war, discussing not only its potentially huge cost in human lives, but also its possible impact

Andrew Sullivan is a Sophomore in Berkeley and an Assistant Editor of the YPM.

12

*One woman
from North
Carolina went
so far as to
label the pro-
testers
"traitors"*

on the balance of power in the region, the American government's need to address domestic problems before international crises, and the nagging question of why exactly we are fighting in the Gulf. Vincent Scully said that while the issue of whether to fight this war is not as clear-cut as it was during Vietnam, when the US could have withdrawn at any time and eventually did, he felt that the war did not have to happen and that it was not too late for a diplomatic solution to the crisis. Melvin Wade discussed his own experience as an anti-war protester and talked of the lessons America has learned from the Vietnam War. William Nordhaus emphasized that the issues surrounding the war are not at all easily expressed in black and white terms, and he outlined the questions he believed each person should answer when making his or her own decision about whether to support the war, such as whether the cause is just and whether the war is worth the cost.

On Saturday evening, 19 January, I attended a candlelight vigil of about sixty people. Sponsored by the Yale Student Friends of Israel and Yale Undergraduates Endorsing Strong American-Israeli Relations, the vigil intended to deplore the attacks by Iraq on Israel and to show solidarity with the Israeli people. Three speakers related the terror which struck Israelis and Jews everywhere when Scud missiles hit civilian areas in Tel Aviv. They also affirmed Israel's right to defend itself, although none said that Israel should retaliate now and one explicitly praised Israel's restraint for not immediately retaliating. All expressed their fervent hopes for peace. During the demonstration, several people held Israeli flags in addition to candles; between and after the speeches, songs were sung which I did not recognize (I do not know Hebrew) but which sounded very much like songs of solidarity, hope, and peace. Before marching to Cross Campus, the crowd sang both the American and Israeli national anthems, although all eyes were on the Israeli flag the entire time. At Cross Campus, the crowd formed a large circle and sang for another fifteen minutes before dispersing.

In addition to observing these events, I heard on the radio and saw on television reports of anti-war protests in Washington and San Francisco. These reports were sketchy, usually presented as a contrast to polls showing 75 to 80 percent approval of the President's handling of

the Gulf crisis or of the decision to go to war. The reports often included some talk of the slogans chanted by the crowd, usually "No Blood for Oil." There were also reports of pro-war protests. These were smaller, and had many more American flags, with protesters using "Support Our Troops" as their main slogan, although I heard a couple of reports of demonstrators chanting "USA! USA!" as if this were the Olympic Games.

Finally, on CBS Radio on 18 January and in conversation with some other Yale students, I have heard harsh criticism of the anti-war protests. Several callers to a nation-wide talk show that Friday afternoon expressed sentiments ranging from disagreement with to outright condemnation of the anti-war protesters, accusing them of hurting troop morale and causing disunity, as protesters did during Vietnam, at a time when the troops and the President need support the most. One woman from North Carolina went so far as to label the protesters "traitors." The commentators quickly defended people's right to express opinions, something not every caller was willing to concede.

Overall, I was impressed with the level of discourse, the respect and tolerance shown for opposing points of view, and the sincere desire for peace as soon as possible expressed by most of the people I have heard speak here at Yale. These have been exhibited not only by most of the anti-war demonstrators but also by most of those I know who support the war. This was a pleasant surprise, considering the types of protests which have occurred at the University of Michigan and, more importantly, considering what I heard at the vigil the night of the first bombing raids. That night, in addition to the condemnations of the attack which I had expected, I also heard calls to occupy Woodbridge Hall; how this would help end the war was unclear, but the speaker did say that as the center of power at Yale it had some link to the war. I fully expected a confrontation which would alienate most of the Yale community.

Tolerance and sensitivity prevailed, however, at the first rally I attended, although protesters used a substantial amount of confrontational rhetoric, which I will discuss below. For example, during the open-microphone period which lasted for at least a half an hour, the crowd listened respectfully, even to the one pro-war speaker. I was also impressed by the attitude taken by the demonstrators towards the

WE SHALL NOT BE MOVED

troops in the Gulf. Unlike Vietnam anti-war activists, who frequently blamed the troops, some of whom were conscripts, for the war, these demonstrators have shown much more sensitivity in this regard. Protesters frequently appealed: "Support the Troops: Bring Them Home," which is a major step forward from the blatant disrespect of the armed forces prevalent during the Vietnam era. Nobody at these rallies would ever consider, for example, spitting at members of the military.

The confrontational nature of some of the statements made on Thursday and Friday disturbed me. A few people made claims that George Bush is no better than Saddam Hussein because he does not pursue the domestic policy which they desire him to follow, whether it be more AIDS research, affirmative action, affordable housing, or aid for the cities. A few speakers accused President Bush of fighting a racist war because minorities are disproportionately represented in the armed forces, or because (as one gentleman suggested) he fears the rise of a "Third World, dark-skinned superpower" in Iraq. These scenarios and accusations are rather far-fetched; I have no knowledge of President Bush plundering a defenseless country out of greed or launching weapons at purely civilian areas, as Saddam Hussein has done. Personal attacks, such as "Shame on you, George Bush,"

by nature tend to alienate those who might otherwise be listening. These protesters imply that anyone who supports the war is a racist and no better than Saddam Hussein. This will not win converts to a cause. Only a few of the many speakers on 17 January presented these views, and the open forum provided the best medium through which people could respond to the war.

The following morning at the Federal Building, the crowd was much smaller; this did not surprise me, considering the attack on Israel. That the attack appeared to have had no effect whatsoever on the protesters disturbed me. The songs, chants, and speeches were exactly the same as before; after Hussein had shown his willingness to hit densely populated areas in Tel Aviv, the crowd continued to chant "Hell No, We Won't Go, We Won't Fight for Texaco" and "Bush is Idiotic, Peace is Patriotic." The topic of Israel came up only once at the very end of the ninety-minute protest, when one woman said that Bush was to blame for the attack. I found the protest extremely ironic when the blockaders and supporters sang "We Shall Not Be Moved." "That's right," I thought as I looked at the headline on the copies of the *New Haven Register* for sale ten feet away, "they are not moved, not even by the news."

The relative intolerance of this crowd appeared again when counter-demonstrators began their protest; I turned to look, whereupon the gentleman next to me told me to keep my back turned. The woman who announced the Teach-In told us that "all points of view will be represented...but come anyway." The counter-protesters were less than tolerant; "You're wasting city money," they said. "Go home." "Get a job." Throughout the demonstration, the gentleman across the street looked on in silence, waving his American flag. I fear that he has become used to protests such as this, at which the people demonstrating on both sides of the issue show disrespect for their opponents' right to listen and be heard that American servicemen fight to preserve. I regret that he did not come to Cross Campus on Thursday, where democracy in fact was in action, rather than subject to defiance.

I regret that he did not come to the Teach-In, the format of which was also democratic and where most of the professors and students were tolerant. Although I did not agree at all with several of the speakers, the level of discourse they maintained pleased me, as well

I 3

The woman who announced the Teach-In told us that "all points of view will be represented... but come anyway"

People made claims that George Bush is no better than Hussein because he does not pursue their domestic policy

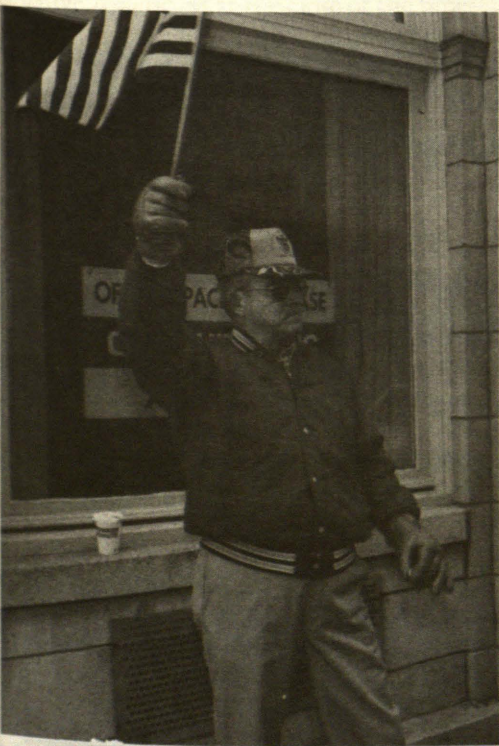


Photo courtesy of Jim Turrell/Yale Daily News

I 4

*Everyone
hopes for and
prays for and
tries to
achieve peace
in his or her
own way*

as the sense that, whatever our individual opinions, all five hundred of us in Battell Chapel were dedicated to achieving peace as soon as possible. Professor Nordhaus impressed me particularly by echoing most accurately my own thoughts that this crisis is not as simple as slogans might suggest and that, in the end, history will decide whether this war was worth it; for now, to decide whether this war is worth fighting is difficult. In the question-and-answer session, his comment that persuasive action of whatever kind will work "not through volume or numbers but rather through the power of the case" also rang true.

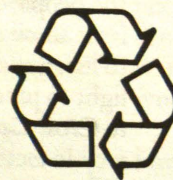
He would have found the vigil in support of Israel encouraging. A group of people gathered there to express not its political views, which the first speaker acknowledged to be diverse, but instead its solidarity with a people who were suffering needlessly from the war. The people at this meeting were the most unified of all those at all the protests to which I went, and although I attended as an observer, and although I am not Jewish and know no Hebrew, and although I do not consider myself a "supporter of Israel" by the common usage of the term, still I felt more solidarity with these fifty people than I did with any other group of demonstrators on either side of this issue. These people expressed their outrage and grief which

resulted from a tragic series of events; they showed their support for innocent people caught in the crossfire, and they hoped and prayed for peace, not only for Israel but for the region and the world.

I identified most strongly with these people, and with Professor Nordhaus, and with the gentleman at the Federal Building standing alone with the American flag, because each represents in part what I am trying to do and what I think all of us need to do in this crisis. We should show our solidarity with the innocent people who suffer from events they cannot control, including the people of not only Israel and Kuwait but also of Iraq, Saudi Arabia, and the entire region. We should also include us and allied soldiers—and drafted Iraqis—who have put themselves at risk. As we watch events unfold, we should each decide for ourselves as best as we can what we think the right course of action is. We should not hesitate to stand and be counted when we come to this conclusion, and each of us should avoid divisive rhetoric which will only alienate those who disagree. If we maintain open minds and mutual respect, we will be able to preserve the unity we need in time of war. Everyone hopes for and prays for and tries to achieve peace in his or her own way. In the final analysis, that is all that any one of us can do.

Our 19th year of serving the Yale Community

- All work is Done on Recycled Paper
- Full and Self Serve Copying
- Full Color Laser Copies
- Student Packets
- Fax Service
- Quality Printing
- Self Serve Macintosh
- LaserWriter Prints
- Desktop Publishing
- Laminating
- Binding



776-6000
27 Whitney Ave.
 (corner of Whitney and Grove)
777-1111
280 York St.
 (corner of York and Broadway)

MINITPRINT™
 on york street

The Silent Minority

Scott Savitz

15

I sit by the crackling radiator, watching Cable News Network. It is the twenty-ninth of December, 1990. I see footage concerning Kuwait, California citrus groves, and scenes from various basketball games. After two hours of the same news reports, I lose all hope of hearing even a whisper concerning the massacre which occurred a century ago today at a place called Wounded Knee.

The slaughter at Wounded Knee is one of the less well-known atrocities committed by the armed forces of the United States. To a generation born in the aftermath of My Lai and Kent State, the slaughter of several hundred Native Americans at the close of the nineteenth century may appear distant and unimportant. Few Americans have heard of Wounded Knee; fewer still know the details of what happened there. It is necessary for our generation to re-examine this shameful portion of our collective past, that we may attempt to redress our society's wrongs and prevent them from recurring.

In the fall of 1890, the Native Americans of the Dakota region were restless. Only a few years before, they, using the force of arms, had been able to block further occupation of their territories by white settlers, thus preventing the United States government from establishing a trail to Montana. They had even defeated their greatest adversary, General Custer. The Sioux were then confined to small reservations; their little food and few supplies had to be given to them by the US government since they could no longer roam the plains in search of the buffalo. The future was bleak.

Amidst this poverty and squalor, the

Sioux of the region began to follow Wovoka, "the Paiute Messiah," who proclaimed that those Indians who had died would soon be resurrected and that the white men would be buried by new soil. The living could partake in the paradise to come only if they performed a mysterious "ghost dance." Like many Jews under Roman rule, the Sioux found solace in the words of a spiritual leader who promised to heal their painful wounds.

Reservation police were disturbed by the ghost dance, and they ordered the removal of the aged warrior Sitting Bull. When Sitting Bull was arrested, however, the Indian police found angry ghost dancers attempting to block their path. One dancer, Catch-the-Bear, fired on one of Sitting Bull's captors. A policeman, Marcellus Red Tomahawk, immediately shot Sitting Bull through the head.¹

It was the fifteenth of December. Over the next few days, various portions of the Sioux tribe migrated throughout the area, trying to stay clear of the US Army. Several hundred Sioux under the command of Big Foot, began to move on the twenty-second of December, only to be halted by the army. That evening, fearing attack by the troops if they remained, those Sioux fled into the Dakota Badlands once again. They hoped to reach Red Cloud's forces at the Pine Ridge Reservation, where that chief could offer them sanctuary from the Americans.²

As Big Foot's followers journeyed southward, the inhospitable Badlands proved to be true to its name. Little food could be found, and the freezing winds tormented the already sickly tribe. Meanwhile, soldiers of the Seventh Cavalry (which had once been Custer's unit) pursued the Native Americans. They finally caught up with the starving Indians just eight-

The slaughter at Wounded Knee is one of the less well-known atrocities committed by the armed forces of the United States

Scott Savitz is a Freshman in Timothy Dwight.

een miles from Red Cloud's campground; Big Foot had no choice but to surrender unconditionally.³

The Seventh Cavalry, well-clothed and well-fed, took its prisoners to a small campground near Wounded Knee. The Sioux feared that the soldiers would attempt to shoot them, but were reassured by Yellow Bird, an Indian leader, that the white man's bullets would not harm the ghost dancers. Soldiers and Indians alike slept uneasily during the terrible night of the twenty-eighth. Big Foot, among others, suffered from pneumonia; warm clothing was scarce.

The sun rose on the twenty-ninth of December. Colonel Forsyth, one of the army commanders at Wounded Knee, demanded that all male adults gather at Big Foot's tent. There they were told to turn in their arms; twenty men soon returned with two antiquated guns. Forsyth accused Big Foot of concealing additional weapons, but Big Foot claimed that they had been burned in his people's flight. Forsyth sent out his own men to search for weapons, and they discovered twelve more ancient guns. The soldiers also confiscated axes, awls, and other tools which could conceivably serve as weapons. Sioux warriors began to turn in their weapons voluntarily. The soldiers continued their search, violating at least one Indian woman while doing so.⁴

Then tragedy struck. Sitting Bull's adopted son, John, carried his gun towards the pile of collected weapons. Deaf and mute, he was not following the army's oral instructions to the letter. Two soldiers seized him violently, and his gun went off. Immediately, firing began throughout the area.

What began as a confused response to gunfire soon degenerated into a bloody slaughter of the Sioux. Many of the soldiers were too eager to "avenge" the death of General Custer, although Big Foot and most of his party had not fought at Little Big Horn. The Seventh Cavalry killed indiscriminately, making no distinctions between warriors and their families. Approximately three hundred Sioux were dead by afternoon. In the course of the battle, twenty-five soldiers were killed; twenty-four of them died of bullet-wounds which their own comrades had accidentally inflicted. The battle at Wounded Knee appears to have been one-sided.⁵

One hundred years later, the descendants of many Wounded Knee survivors and

hundreds of other Sioux returned to the site of Wounded Knee. Their journey had actually begun on 15 December at the site of Sitting Bull's death, and included a 220-mile trek to Wounded Knee.⁶ Their motives were many. Some cited the need to deal with the emotions which the knowledge of the slaughter at Wounded Knee had engendered within them. One leader, Birgil Kills Straight, said that the mourners were present in order to "wipe away the tears."⁷

According to Mario Gonzalez, the attorney for the Wounded Knee Survivors Association, "We want Wounded Knee to be remembered so it will never happen again."⁸ Since the massacre at Wounded Knee, remarkably little has been done to preserve the memory of what happened there. No national monument marks the site; the governor of South Dakota is still trying to convince Washington to establish such a memorial.⁹

Other than the ceremonies of December 1990, the only somewhat recent event at Wounded Knee took place in 1973. Russell Means, head of the militant American Indian Movement, laid siege to Wounded Knee in order to bring attention to the alleged corruption of Native American chiefs. In the course of the siege, two Indians were shot to death, creating additional enmity between Whites and Indians. In an effort to reduce some of these tensions, South Dakota's Governor Mickelson named 1990 "The Year of Reconciliation" and went to Wounded Knee to honor those who had been killed. Russell Means himself tried to prevent the governor from entering.¹⁰

In the century since Wounded Knee, America has done little to help Native Americans escape from the poverty to which our society has subjected them. This can be partly attributed to the media's lack of attention to Native American issues. For example, the *New York Times* reported the hundred-year anniversary of Wounded Knee in a small article at the bottom of page twelve. *The Philadelphia Inquirer* published two short articles on the commemoration of Wounded Knee; *Newsweek* did not even mention the massacre or its commemoration.

Part of the reason for the commemorative ceremonies at Wounded Knee was to draw media attention to Native Americans' present plight and fears about the future. Though Native Americans number fourteen million (more than the population of Kuwait), their history and their struggles today are largely

In the century since Wounded Knee, America has done little to help Native Americans escape from the poverty to which our society has subjected them

ignored by most Americans. Our "American history" textbooks generally discuss Indians only with regard to their interaction with European-Americans. The few images of Indians with which Americans grow up are often stereotyped; for example, a Daffy Duck cartoon portrays Indians as merciless "redskins." The media, as has already been stated, provides very little coverage of Native American problems and issues. Yale's media exemplify this trend; Native Americans are scarcely mentioned in any of the dozens of publications on campus.

Though many excuses are given for our society's lack of attention to Native American issues, the prosperity of Native Americans is certainly not one of them. Over one-third of all Native Americans live below the poverty line; their average income is only 70 percent of the national average. Unemployment among Native Americans is rampant, particularly on the reservations. Widespread alcoholism devastates Indian life. The reservations generally consist of infertile land which was not desired by white settlers; the United States government legally owns even this land.¹¹ Few jobs are available on the reservations, although some tribes have been able to establish small industries.¹² Native Americans' meager lifestyles can only be maintained with about three billion dollars in federal aid each year.¹³

As a small minority, Native Americans face the challenge of choosing either to assimilate themselves into white society or to separate themselves from it. Although all ethnic and racial minorities face the difficult question of assimilation, no other minority has distinct territories which have been set aside for it by the US government. Native Americans are forced to choose between living in poverty on the undesirable lands which comprise the reservations, or residing in a foreign society which has slaughtered thousands of Indians and stolen their possessions. Only 25 percent of all Native Americans currently live on reservations, although some who have resided elsewhere are returning.¹⁴

What, then, is the future of Native Americans? Many, like Russell Means, see militancy as the only path by which they can escape their poverty and despair. Fortunately, most Native Americans are looking for alternative solutions to their problems. Through industrial investment, many tribes are beginning to develop decent standards of living. The Passamaquodies of Maine own several radio

stations; the Cherokees of Oklahoma have established a defense subcontracting plant.¹⁵ Many Native Americans are calling for restructuring of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, which spends one-third of its billion-dollar budget on the BIA itself.¹⁶ Through other economic, political, and social struggles, Native Americans are resolving their problems and maintaining their heritage.

Native Americans have only begun to recover from the shock that began when foreign societies first implanted themselves upon this continent. From Columbus at Watling Island to the US Army at Wounded Knee, European-based expansionists have slaughtered and pillaged Native Americans. In the hundred years since the last massacre, very little has been done to help Native Americans to attain economic, political, and social equality with the rest of the nation. Perhaps, with greater awareness and activism on the part of the American public, we can partially rectify our long history of theft, oppression, and murder against Native Americans - and we can begin to do so by recalling the horror of Wounded Knee.

Notes

- 1 Brown, Dee. *Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee*. New York: Pocket Books, 1981. pp. 406-411.
2. Miller, David Humphreys. *Ghost Dance*. New York: Duell, Sloan, and Pearce, 1959. pp. 204-5.
3. Ibid., pp. 215-217.
4. Ibid., pp. 225-227.
5. Ibid., pp. 229-235.
- 6 *The New York Times*. "A Century Later at Wounded Knee, Indians Try to Bury the Heartbreak," 30 December 1990. p.12.
- 7 *The Philadelphia Inquirer*. "Wounded Knee Victims are Mourned," 30 December 1990. p. 3.
- 8 Ibid.
- 9 Ibid.
- 10 Ibid.
- 11 *The Economist*. "In the Red," 25 February 1989. pp. 25-26.
- 12 *Newsweek*. "Indian Tribes, Incorporated," 5 December 1988. pp. 40-41.
- 13 *The Economist*. "In the Red," p.26.
- 14 *Newsweek*. 2 May 1988, p.26.
- 15 Ibid. "Indian Tribes Incorporated," pp.40-41.
- 16 *The Economist*. "In the Red," p. 26.

17

Native Americans are scarcely mentioned in any of the dozens of publications on campus

With greater awareness and activism on the part of the American public, we can partially rectify our long history of theft, oppression, and murder against Native Americans

Love: An American Fairy-Tale

Gautam Dutta

I'm not trying to land him. I'm just using him for sex.

- Vivian Ward, *Pretty Woman*

American culture at large harbors a flawed conception of romantic love. Rather than explore the many facets of love, many popular films and songs consciously pander to their audience by oversimplifying the notions of love and romance. In this simplistic world-view, love spontaneously creates a bond that will never be torn asunder. In order to gain a better perspective on this convoluted romantic ideal, one should consider four recent films particularly relevant to the portrayal of love: *Pretty Woman*, *The Princess Bride*, *Bull Durham*, and *The Accidental Tourist*.

Pretty Woman presents an archetype of the self-gratifying eighties. It offers romance on the moral level of Ivan Boesky, yet is billed as ideal for a date. Corporate raider Edward Lewis picks up a Hollywood hooker named Vivian Ward in order to get directions to Beverly Hills. The two subsequently agree to a monetary proposition, whereby Vivian, for three thousand dollars, would serve as Edward's escort for a week. Thus begins a self-centered, cynical relationship that satisfies both parties. While Edward is wary of future "romantic hassles," Vivian cannot afford to become emotionally attached to her clients. Matters of love have been relegated to a mere business transaction.

The movie must, however, deliver romance, regardless of how contrived it may be. Not surprisingly, then, both Edward and Vivian miraculously discover real and substantial individuals behind their sexual personas. At the

same time, the film attempts to depict Edward as a sensitive individual. Suddenly, Edward suffers spiritual torment, and he can no longer pursue his trade with a good conscience.

Pretty Woman concludes happily, of course. Edward forswears future hostile take-overs by becoming a partner with a navy defense contractor. On the quasi-romantic front, Edward learns in time not to treat Vivian as a "whore," but to appreciate her as a person capable of her own feelings and dignity. Her sudden departure at the end of the six days for which he paid her jolts Edward into realizing the apparent truth: he is in love with Vivian. He responds by becoming a modern-day Prince Charming; he "rescues" his styled princess from an ersatz tower, the high-rise apartment in which she lives. As the film ends, their marriage seems likely.

Pretty Woman emerges as a trite celebration of self-centered materialism; love is portrayed as being, literally, skin-deep. The entire film is devoted to images of two of the most coveted possessions, money and power. In fact, its very notion of love is problematic, for the romance depicted is grounded on a sexual, rather than personal, basis. At best, the relationship brings Vivian a wardrobe of clothes and a greater appreciation of opera. With a material focus, the film fails to convince the viewer that the relationship between Edward and Vivian has actually transcended the physical level, beyond Vivian's beauty and Edward's wealth.

On a more disturbing note, *Pretty Woman* condescends to the viewer, for it itself addresses each major theme throughout its one hundred minutes. As if the fairy-tale sequence were not already manifest, Vivian must constantly remind the viewer of its presence; at one

Gautam Dutta is a Freshman in Saybrook and Managing Editor of the YPM.

juncture she even tells Edward: "I want the fairy tale." Edward, too, must make his analytical contribution. He perceptively finds their common ground - they both "screw people for money." *The Princess Bride*, on the other hand, aspires to no such profundity, as it presents an outright spoof of idyllic romance.

In contrast to *Pretty Woman*, *The Princess Bride* offers a tale of "true love": its trials, tribulations, and ultimate triumph. Aptly, this parody portrays love in an exalted state - and succeeds. Buttercup, a fair maiden in the kingdom of Florin, falls in love with Westley, a farmhand at her family farm. Westley, however, leaves her temporarily in order to gain his fortune. Reassuring Buttercup of his safety, he rhapsodizes that true love will only be "postponed" by death, never destroyed. Destiny, however, ordains that this novel theory be brought to the test: the Dread Pirate Roberts reportedly kills Westley at sea.

Buttercup is then betrothed to her kingdom's ruler, Prince Humperdinck. Shortly before the wedding, a trio of mercenaries kidnap the future princess. They, in turn, are pursued by the Dread Pirate Roberts and, separately, Prince Humperdinck. As events unfold, the Dread Pirate Roberts, who is none other than Westley himself, overwhelms the mercenaries by dint of intelligence and physical prowess and rescues Buttercup. Unfortunately, Westley is finally captured and killed by Prince Humperdinck, who thus regains his betrothed and eliminates a potent rival in a single stroke.

Death, fortunately, can occasionally be conquered. The pair of humbled mercenaries

whom Westley has spared return the favor to their erstwhile adversary; they arrange for his revival at the hands of the kingdom's miracle-worker. Having reawakened, Westley masterminds the rescue of his beloved from the conjugal clutches of Humperdinck. Nothing, not even lack of bodily mobility (the lifesaving potion only takes effect slowly), deters him from success. Westley and Buttercup flee Florin, reunited in romantic bliss.

In its world-view, *The Princess Bride* embraces a pristine conception of love that is based primarily on personality. The film features no obligatory sex scenes; none are required to convey the essence of "true love" to the audience. Despite being a self-confessed fairy tale, the film bears an attitude towards love that now endears it to viewers. In contrast to the romantic cynicism of *Pretty Woman*, *The Princess Bride* offers an idealized, yet still cherished version of love, which actually occurs "as [they] wish." The film succeeds in harkening back to an era of innocence, in which one is judged by virtue, not by sheer wealth or beauty, a lesson that *Bull Durham* painfully realizes.

Bull Durham introduces the modern genre of romance: a more realistically portrayed relationship grounded in the contemporary world of sexual candor. The film recounts a peculiar love triangle within America's Sport. Annie Savoy, a baseball groupie with a penchant for poetry, avidly follows the progress of the minor-league Durham Bulls, and the team's players in particular. This season, her interest turns to Ebby Calvin "Nuke" Laloosh, an immature yet talented pitcher on the path to the major leagues. She is shaken, however, by Crash Davis, Nuke's veteran catcher.

As a result, three parallel relationships develop. In their own capacities, both Crash and Annie prime Nuke for the majors. Crash hones Nuke's raw ability on the field, while Annie uses sex as a vehicle to inculcate the poetic tradition in the dull Nuke. Crash and Annie, meanwhile, are increasingly drawn to one another, although they attempt to resist their mutual attraction. Only Nuke's sudden promotion to the "Show" allows this true romance finally to prosper. Annie and Crash retire from their active pursuits; Crash is cut from the team, while Annie quits her tutelage of "boys" in the ways of the world.

Bull Durham provides a fascinating study of the role of sex in a relationship. Annie views sex as an instrument by which she can



HE LOVES ME...
HE LOVES ME NOT.

"expand [the players'] minds...and feel pretty;" sex is both instructive and self-gratifying. While performing her role as a maternal dominatrix, she practices an epicurean form of promiscuity, as she remains "monogamous within the framework of the baseball season." During Nuke's season, however, Annie confronts her greatest threat to her set lifestyle when she falls in love with Crash.

20

Above all, Annie yearns for stability in her life; her seasonal relationships have fulfilled this need for personal security. Ironically, she resists a long-term commitment that would accomplish this very objective. Indeed, that would require the abandonment of her dominating role in actively *sharing* her life with another. In her mind, a controlled fling allows her to "be exotic and mysterious," to be a priestess of baseball.

Curiously, the prevalence of sex throughout the film ultimately denigrates itself. A deep vulnerability lies behind Annie's promiscuous behavior, and Nuke's abrupt departure only contributes to Annie's sense of ennui. Annie gradually realizes that sex has brought her not lasting happiness, but only fleeting fulfillment of her self-esteem. In a reversal, the sexually liberated Annie now regards marriage wistfully. "We all deserve to wear white," she says. Unlike a fairy tale, *Bull Durham* dissolves in ambiguity. As if to anticipate *The Accidental Tourist*, *Bull Durham* only proffers a single conclusion regarding love: it is not grounded in sex.

The Accidental Tourist provides a study in contrasts. It offers the most insightful glimpse into romance, yet achieves this goal with remarkable subtlety. Travel writer Macon Leary, who once lived by a set schedule and routine,

confronts a shattered personal life. After his son Ethan is shot dead in a robbery, his marriage collapses. His wife, Sarah, cannot bear the strain of the twelve-year-old's death and leaves him, setting the stage for the entrance of divorcée Muriel Pritchett.

Muriel, who operates a local dog kennel, is hired to train Macon's dog, who is occasionally inclined to bite his benevolent master. After this professional introduction, Muriel and Macon become romantically involved. Macon now takes responsibility for Muriel's five-year-old son Alexander who was born sickly and allergic to most foods and his environment. With Alexander, Macon's attachment to Muriel thus assumes a therapeutic aspect, since he is offered another chance at fatherhood.

The unprepared Macon soon balks at Muriel's growing insistence on marriage. In an act of expedience, he reunites with Sarah when she unexpectedly returns. Macon, however, has only postponed a final choice between the two women. Muriel and Sarah follow him on a trip to Paris and demand that Macon finally make the decision he has long evaded. After much agonizing, Macon realizes that he loves Muriel more deeply and profoundly than Sarah. At long last, Macon returns to Muriel—and Alexander.

While *The Accidental Tourist* and *Bull Durham* employ sex in a different manner, they ultimately convey the identical lesson that sex does not predicate an entire relationship. The attraction between Macon and Muriel is more spiritual than physical. They, in fact, enjoy a romance far more constructive and tempestuous than that of Romeo and Juliet. In the case of Muriel and Macon, each party acts for the other's benefit, not destruction. Muriel helps

State Street ELECTRONICS, INC.

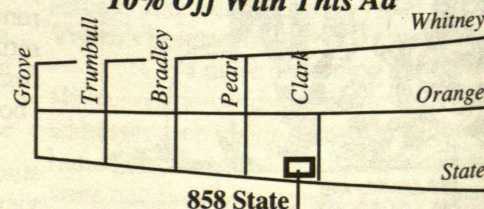
Professional
Audio/Video/Television Repairs
at Affordable Prices

858 State St. 773-5023

Specialty Service Available
VCRs • Video Cameras • CD Players

All Major Brands
Panasonic • RCA • GE • Zenith • Sony

10% Off With This Ad



LOVE: AN AMERICAN FAIRY-TALE

Macon recover from his paralyzing grief and depression, while Macon offers her much-needed support to raise her young son.

Love is not what it's all about. There are all kinds of other issues.

With this fateful discovery, Macon emerges as a singular hero, for therein he finally gathers the courage to reject the glamour of Sarah in favor of Muriel. That he wavers before arriving at his decision further enhances his character's credibility. Macon cannot peremptorily disregard the moving pleas of Sarah, whom he still loves. By choosing Muriel, Macon himself brings about a fairy-tale ending without resorting to any *deus ex machina* - true, uncontrived love has triumphed.

Of the four films, the overwhelming popularity of *Pretty Woman* raises the most troubling questions regarding the American psyche. Viewers did not at all mind its shallow portrayal of love: its gross income far surpassed those of the other movies considered. *The Accidental Tourist*, on the other hand, performed the worst at the box office, as few opted for its realistic, yet rewarding, depiction of love.

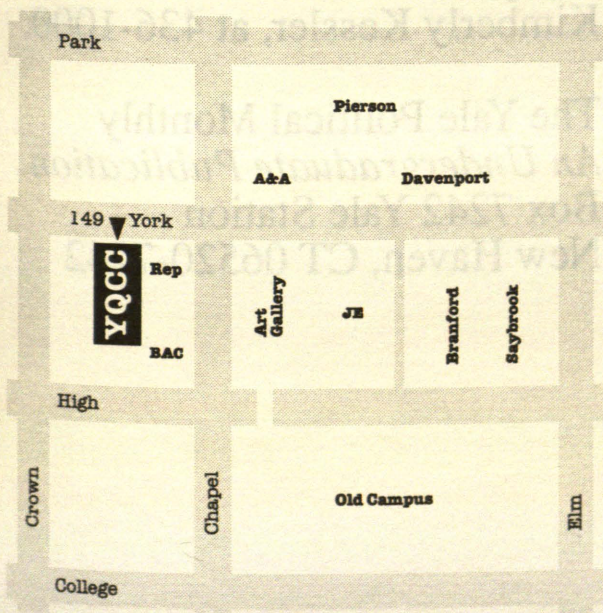
While movies are often casually dismissed as entertainment, they often provide

invaluable insight into contemporary society. The tremendous success enjoyed by fairy-tale romances is disquieting, for it erringly leads viewers to expect an ideal form of love. Under this spell, one would be more inclined to abandon a relationship rather than attempt to redress its problems. As long as America feebly strives to live a fantasy, it will never escape its real-life romantic malady: a fifty percent divorce rate.

21

YQCC

Yale Quick Copy Center



149 York Street
432-COPY
(432-2679)
8 to 5 Monday-Friday

Résumés
Tabletents
Posters
Course material
Typesetting from
Macintosh disks
& whatnot

3 1/2¢*

— Still the lowest
prices in Elm City

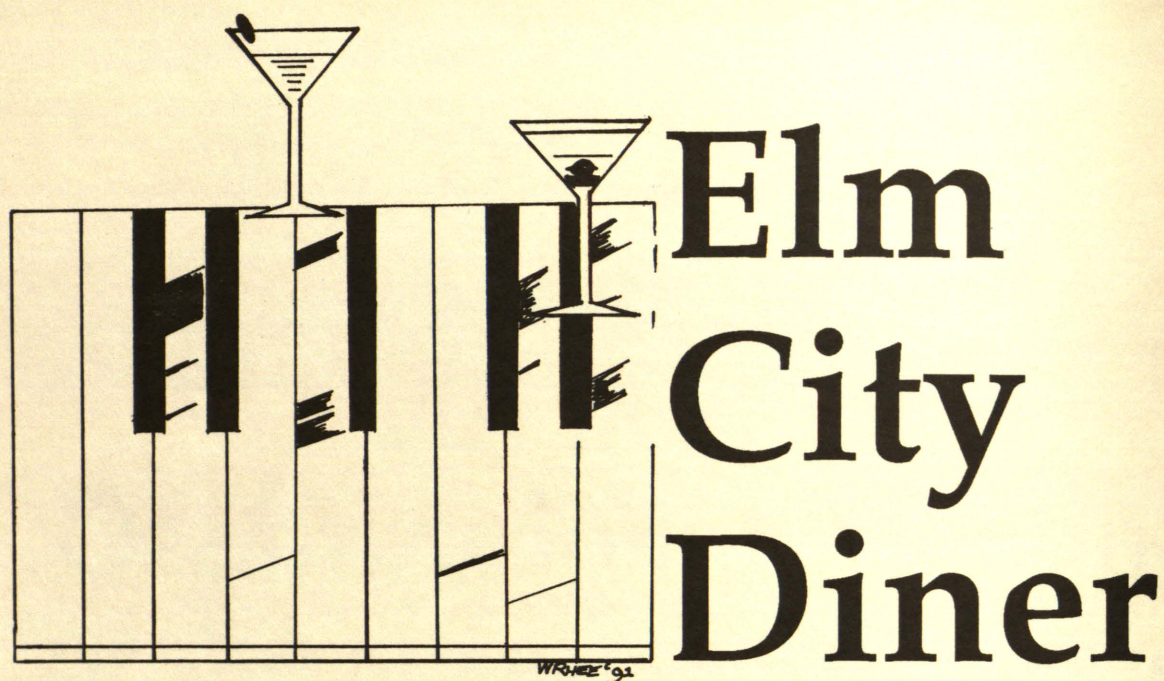
*per copy for more than ten copies of the same original;
the price is 4 cents each for one to ten copies.

The Yale Political Monthly will host an Organizational Meeting for the spring semester on Monday, 4 February 1991 in LC 204 at 8:30p.m.

The Yale Political Monthly is a registered Undergraduate Organization. We are a non-partisan publication seeking to present intelligent political discussion from many viewpoints. Articles from all members of the Yale community will be considered for publication regardless of their political orientation. Although you need not join our staff to write for us, we always have space on our masthead for energetic people who are committed to the free exchange of ideas in a non-partisan forum.

If you are interested in working for the YPM in any capacity or submitting your own compositions and cannot attend the meeting, please contact our Editor, Kimberly Kessler, at 436-1000.

The Yale Political Monthly
An Undergraduate Publication
Box 7242 Yale Station
New Haven, CT 06520-7242



A RESTAURANT

*Nostalgic Backdrop for Fine Food
at the corner of Chapel and Howe*

Piano Entertainment Friday and Saturday Nights

Great New Menu • Under New Management

Open 24 Hours
10% Student Discount

1228 Chapel Street, New Haven, CT 06511 (203) 772-1800

Bring this ad for a complimentary glass of House Wine or Beer with any purchase of an entrée.